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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S2000000044)

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SUBJECT: AISC LIST OF DISAPPEARED AND DETAINED PERSONS -
"THE LIST OF 7,500"

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 8958 (B) BUENOS AIRES 9109 (NOTAL)

1. LONDON TIMES STRINGER ANDREW TARNOWSKI MET WITH
EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER ON DECEMBER 20 TO DISCUSS
TARNOWSKI'S ALLEGATIONS THAT THE "ARGENTINE INFORMATION
SERVICE CENTER" (AISC) LIST IS A "GROSS MISREPRESENTATION"
OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA AND UNFAIR
TO GOA. ACCORDING TO TARNOWSKI, A STORY HE WROTE ON
THE VANCE VISIT WHICH APPEARED IN THE LONDON TIMES ON
NOVEMBER 23 CORRECTLY CHARACTERIZED THE AISC LIST AS
BEING FILLED WITH ERRORS AND DUPLICATIONS. TARNOWSKI
SAYS HIS STORY PRODUCED A STRONGLY WORDED LETTER FROM
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL MARTIN
ENNALS REBUTTING THE LONDON TIME'S PRESENTATION.
TARNOWSKI FEELS THAT HIS REPUTATION AS A JOURNALIST IS AT STAKE.

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HE SAID FALSE RUMOURS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING THAT HE RECEIVED
10 TO 20 THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THE STORY FROM A PERSONAL
FRIEND AT GOA'S NEW YORK PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM. HE AND HIS

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WIFE, ISABEL TRUJILLO, STRINGER FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE HERE, HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING AN INTENSIVE STUDY OF THE LIST.

2. IN DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF TARNOWSKI STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR "ITS MISREPRESENTATION" OF THE LIST. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT EMBASSY AIDE-MEMOIRE (WHICH WAS LATER READ TO HIM) TRANSMITTING THE LIST SPECIFICALLY STATED THAT THE USG HAD NO MEANS OF VERIFYING THE INFORMATION ON THE LIST BUT WISHED TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE FOR THE GOA'S USE. TARNOWSKI RESPONDED THAT AS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS LENT ITS PRESTIGE TO THE LIST, IT HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO CORRECT FALSE CHARACTERIZATIONS WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN THE WORLD PRESS. TARNOWSKI STATED THAT THE LIST DOES NOT CONTAIN 7,500 PERSONS BUT CONTAINS BY HIS ESTIMATE UNDER 5,700 PERSONS. (HE MAY BE CORRECT -- TO OUR KNOWLEDGE NO EARLIER COMPLETE TABULATION WAS MADE.) FURTHERMORE HE POINTED OUT THE LIST CONTAINS PERSONS WHO WERE DETAINED OR DISAPPEARED PRIOR TO THE MILITARY JUNTA'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER IN MARCH, 1976 -- SOMETHING, OF COURSE, APPARENT TO ANYONE READING THE LIST. FURTHERMORE, THE LIST COUNTS PERSONS WHO WERE DETAINED AND THEN RELEASED BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT.

3. TARNOWSKI IS EXTREMELY UPSET OVER THE AMNESTY LETTER TO THE LONDON TIMES. HE STATED THAT ATTACKING THE LIST WILL STRENGTHEN HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS EFFORTS SUCH AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S BY INSURING THAT "IN THE FUTURE THEY DO THEIR HOMEWORK."

4. EMBOFF REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT THAT TARNOWSKI'S PROBLEMS REGARDING THE LIST RELATE TO HOW THE LIST WAS DESCRIBED BY HIS
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FELLOW JOURNALISTS; HE CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT USG HAS SOME TYPE OF OVERRIDING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONTENT AND PRESS CHARACTERIZATION OF THAT DOCUMENT. WE BELIEVE THE TARNOWSKIS WILL SUBMIT SOME KIND OF "EXPOSE" TO THE TIMES WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.
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